1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

This led to a separation between the brothers and they formed two divisions of the same family. The elder brother was the head of the family of Rautiya Kols and the younger of the Kurha Kols. 564 773

Another story relates that there were once five brothers of the same *kurhi*. Due to lack of food they were forced to separate: one went to the Binj mountains and founded the Binj *kurhi*; another went to a Thakuriya house, found shelter there, and from him are descended the Thakuriya Kols; another who took refuge with the Kumhars, the potters, was the ancestor of the Kurha sept. It is not unlikely that these stories contain the truth that this *kurhi* may have arisen from some marriage with Kumhars or perhaps miscegenation with them, or it may have reference to some occupational adventure on the part of some Kols.

Apparently the use of an earthen vessel by one sub-group does not prevent marriage within the whole group, nor does it limit it to that group, for marriages are possible between them and the Kathautiya Rautiyas who use wooden vessels from which to eat. There is the restriction, though, that Kurhas and Kathautiyas should not eat together unless they are related by marriage, and when this is the case they may compromise by the use of the ordinary brass plate. In a certain centre we were told that the only "pure Rautiyas" were those who used the *kurha* and that there were also definite marriage restrictions between them and the users of the wooden bowl. This, if ever true, is disappearing. 564 [264]

1c. *Kathautiya*. Evidence goes to show that this *kurhi* is also a sub-group of the Rautiyas and differs from the Kurhas in that its members eat from a wooden bowl, called *kathauta* or *kathota*. The women folk, and occasionally the men, wear bits of wood in the lobes of their ears. During childhood the hole in the lobe is enlarged by the insertion of fibres from weeds, and from time to time a new bit is inserted in the attempt to enlarge the hole. We did not find that the Kathautiya Kols were consistent in the use of the wooden dish. At Sihora they told us that while they were Kathautiyas they had nevertheless given up the use of the *kathauta* and had adopted the ordinary brass plate. In other centres, notably one near Katni, they still use the bowl and cling to the custom tenaciously. As far as possible, they declared, all food should be prepared in wooden vessels, and it is expected that they should eat their food from such vessels. They do not manufacture their own *kathautas*, nor is any particular kind of wood used, but the dishes are made by Hindu carpenters from such wood as is available. At the time of death or eclipse of sun or moon the Kurha Kols must throw out all their earthenware dishes; the [415 264] [304 301] [178] [184] [252] [439] [82] [768 415]

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

564 Kathautiyas also throw out their earthenware vessels, but not the
82 wooden ones which are considered to be unaffected by these occur-
768 rences. This may be due to Hindu influences.
415

It was intimated that hypergamy is occasionally practised with
582 the Thakuriyas but in such cases it appears that the girls are "kept"
554 rather than "married". One group of Kathautiyas asserted their superiority over the Thakuriyas and claimed that if a Thakuriya girl came to live with a Kathautiya boy, the Thakuriyas could take her back; but that they would never take back one of their girls who went to live with the Thakuriyas.

Some Kols stated that Binj, Kathariya and Kulmangans are types of Rautiya Kols, but the best evidence appears to be otherwise and these groups are treated separately below.

101 The use of the word "Rautiya" is not confined to the Kols.
171 There is a Munda tribe in Chota Nagpur called Rautiyas and a few
564 members of this tribe are found in the Jashpur State of the Central Provinces. It is also the name of a subcaste of Dahait, a mixed caste of village watchmen of the Jubbulpore and Mandla districts, and several of their subcaste names bear a close resemblance to those of the Kols. It is also a sub-caste of the Kawars and of a section of the Chamars and Rawats (Ahir).[1] The other subgroups of Rautiyas as noted above were not in use elsewhere except that among the Darzis, or tailors there is a Kathautiya subdivision.[2]

2. *Thakuriyas.* Russell and Hiralal[3] are of the opinion
564 that this word is derived from *thakur* meaning "a lord", and they
773 trace this *kurhi* to the intermarriage of Rajput males with Kol females. Such intermarriage probably followed the gradual penetration of the Rajputs into the regions occupied by the Kols. The stories given below concerning the origin of the Thakuriyas probably reflect a long period in which there was a considerable mixture of blood.

According to one story a certain Rautiya Kol had two wives who often quarrelled and the husband saw fit to scold the elder of the two. As a result she left the protection of the Kol and in anger went to the house of the *malguzar* of the village who happened to be a Thakur. She began to live on the veranda of his house, and earned her food with her own hands in any way she could. After some months she gave birth to a son and the Thakur sent word to this effect to her husband, with the request that he should come and take the mother and child

1 Russell and Hiralal, *Op. Cit.*, Vol. I, p. 402.
2 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 376.
3 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 509.

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

764
778

the ashes are thrown is called the *Kharighat* and the ceremony described as *khari thanda karna*—"the cooling of the ashes."

764

THE RETURN TO THE DWELLING PLACE. Whether the body has been buried or burned, the return from that place to the house is essentially the same. The party moves off one by one after encircling the spot, but presently the men linger and group themselves together, and the women do likewise in another group in the rear. Having once completed the round of the grave or cremation place, they should not look backwards lest the movement be interpreted by the spirit as an invitation to come along; or lest they be attacked. The women bring back with them any of the sweets that remained after placing them along the pathway as they went toward the funeral place, also some of the water left after washing the body. The sweets are cast into the tank or river in which they bathe, and the water is kept till they reach the house after the ceremonial bath, when a bit of it may be mixed with *haldi* and scattered on the chief mourner or others, and the rest used to put out any fires in the house.

764
515

Bathing. The ceremonial bath should be taken in a tank or a stream, and if necessary a detour is made to include one in their return trip. If neither is available water from a well may be used, but the actual bathing must be at some distance from the well and the water should be drawn by some one who was not at the burial ground. Whether the bath is taken at a tank or stream, the men should bathe first. The bathers should line up and if possible should all go under the water together. After being submerged once or twice they step back to the bank and proceed home in their wet clothes. The women then bathe following much the same procedure, and go home in wet clothes. Reaching there fresh water must be used to wash their feet and now they may enter the house.

768
765
[296]
[302]

Cleaning the House. During the next few hours after the return home there is much to do. All clothes have to be changed and the dirty ones washed, preferably by a Hindu *dhobi*. All the pots and vessels made of earthenware must be thrown out upon the refuse pile. Sometimes they are broken and at other times are set out and the Domar or Basor comes and takes them away. The floors and walls of the house have to be plastered and thoroughly cleaned. The chief male mourner must have his head and face shaved, but a little tuft of hair, the sacred scalp lock or *chutiya*, is generally left. Usually a Hindu *nai* is called in for this, although the work may also be done

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

768 765 [302] by a Kol. Often all male members of the family are shaved in this manner. Nothing is done to the female mourners to correspond with this. Unkempt hair and dirty clothes are the signs of their mourning.

765 MOURNING FOR THE DEAD (*Daswi*). This may also be considered as the period of uncleanness, although many Kols do not recognize it as such. The number of days that the dead should be mourned, and certain taboos observed, varies according to sex and age. For a man or for a married youth the period is ten days, hence "*daswi*";—for a woman or a married maiden nine days; for a child it varies according to age: five days, three days, or, if it is a very small child there is no period of mourning at all. All over the area the customs are uniform [184] in the cases of men and women, but for children there seems to be a considerable variation of custom.

765 262 During the period of mourning certain foods are taboo and certain kinds of cooking vessels must not be used in the preparation of food. Only simple food should be eaten: nothing should therefore be cooked in *ghi* or oils. No salt or flesh of any kind should be taken. The cooking vessels which are taboo are those in which rich foods are prepared and cooked in oils and *ghi*, such as a frying pan. This rules out the cooking of *puris*. The food during that period must always be [264] eaten at home, and on no account should one accept food cooked in another's house or by someone who is not a member of the family, even if it is cooked in his own house. Violators of these regulations [623] are dealt with by the *panch*. One should also stay pretty close to home, and should not freely enter others' houses, especially at the time they are eating.

765 775 FEEDING THE DEAD. The Kols have a custom of feeding the dead which they generally call *dona*, or *dauna rakhna*. The dead should be fed twice daily during the period of mourning if one can afford it, and if not, once in the evening. This is discontinued after the funeral feast. The chief mourner is generally expected to prepare this food, or it may be prepared along with the ordinary household food. Such food is placed on a *dona*, leaf-plate, and is taken out from the house to a distance of from thirty to forty yards, in the direction of the graveyard. This is placed in the crotch of a tree or it may be set down on the ground. Other things may also be placed there, things the

DONA - SIDE VIEW

Fig. 23

1;Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

After the Basor begins the others may start and all set out to enjoy themselves. Liquor is sometimes freely consumed on such occasions.

Another feast, a family one called *barkhi* (H. *Barsi*), is given after a year, and after this the chief mourner can eat as he likes; it also marks his entry into the society once again. During the year of mourning it is sometimes his custom to eat normal foods at home, but never to go to a feast elsewhere.

MISCELLANEOUS DEATH CUSTOMS. After the return from the graveyard there is no formal visiting of the spot unless it be for the purpose of putting food upon the grave. After three or four days someone from the household may pay the graveyard an informal visit to see if everything is all right and that the grave has not been disturbed by animals. No flowers are put on the grave at any time, and the bones are never dug up and buried again at some other place. Kols also say that they never throw bodies into the streams, although we were informed by one of them that it is sometimes done. At Satna in Rewa State it was related that some times a male corpse may be taken to a river, where the head is shaven by the Hindu *nai* whom they pay two to four annas. As the body is about to be cast into the river the mourners announce that they are ready to give the river a gift, naming a certain sum of money, which they will pay to the Brahmin presiding over that part of the river. The usual amount is Rs. 1-4. This is called *gaunda*—alms. As the body floats away they shout "Go and get salvation" and also the words, "we've been so long together, but from now on we are separated, you from us and we from you, and we shall now have nothing more to do with each other." After this they return to the house and bathe and prepare things as previously related.

There are adjustments necessary within the family after the death of the father or the mother. If the wife has died, all her clothes must be given away to the Domar or Basor. A second wife should never wear the clothes of a deceased woman. However, she may wear the metallic jewellery and ornaments of the first wife, and they are usually given to her.

If the father should die his clothes should also be given away. The widow has to break her glass bangles and this is usually done at the place and the time of the funeral. They may be broken by a member of the family, or a Hindu *nai* may be called. The widow is not required to put away her metallic ornaments.

There is no trace of *sati* or widow burning among the Kols. We found none who had ever heard of a Kolin doing it. One man said: "We